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Systems*

DCI-IC 74-1113

5 March 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Proposal for Conducting Experiments in Conferenced Text Editing (CONTEXT), Initial Guidance

1. DCI/IC 74-0555, dated 19 February 1974, originated by [] IC/PRG, proposes setting up an experiment involving three locations, each provided with CRTs and voice communication equipment. The purpose of the experiment is to test equipment compatibility under conference conditions, to test procedures, and to train operators and familiarize analysts with the system and procedures and get their reactions as users.

2. [] has advised that [] Chief IC/PRG and General Graham, D/DCI/IC have approved this test, and instructed [] to proceed as rapidly as possible. This approval was verbal.

3. The proposal involves technical support. Paragraph 6 of Dr. [] proposal states:

"6. This proposal is essentially outlining the general concept. Much detailed planning would have to be done to bring the test facility into being. There are several options we are currently exploring. The IHC Support Staff has surveyed this field and has excellent contractor and community contacts. We would like to task Acting Chairman, IHC and his staff, as well as the OJCS representative assigned to IC Staff, to provide continuing technical support for this project. An initial report will present data on costs and lead times and the technical options."

4. In preliminary discussions with [] we agreed that the following initial planning parameters affect our approach to a solution of the problem.

a. The main factors to be considered in setting up and operating an experimental conferencing network are:

(1) Technical capabilities desired in the equipment to be used for conferencing.

(2) Cost alternatives. Obviously, if the equipment and support can be obtained from CIA or another agency this will be less costly than contracting for support from industry.

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(3) Time constraints. These will differ depending on the source of the support provided.

(4) Intelligence Community Institutional Capabilities. This is another way of saying "bureaucratic considerations."

b. With these factors in mind, we agreed that the cost saving consideration and the institutional consideration, and perhaps the other two as well, strongly impelled us to exploring within CIA headquarters the capabilities for support from OJCS as an initial step. [] desires the experiment to be conducted here, so that he can be immediately associated with it and direct its work. We agreed that if CIA/[] were unable to support the project, we should next explore DIA, NSA and the Services; although we expect no positive results -- particularly if the experiment is in CIA headquarters -- we should make a record of having checked out these organizations. Finally, if all of the foregoing did not produce a solution adequate to the IC Staff interests, we should ascertain the terms on which contractor external support could be provided.

[]
Acting Chairman

Intelligence Information Handling Committee

Attachment: [] memo to General Graham, DCI/IC 74-0555, dtd 19 Feb. 74

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